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EXAMINER

IRSHADULLAH, M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 06/20/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/122,293

Applicant(s)

SAKAYORI ET AL

Examiner

M. Irshadullah

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17,19,21-25,27 and 29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 20,28 and 30-36 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17,19,21-25,27 and 29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) 1-36 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to correspondence filed March 19, 2002.

Election/Restriction

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-17, 19, 21-25, 27 and 29, drawn to a method and system for ordering parts, classified in class as 705, subclass 29.
 - II. Claims 20 and 28, drawn to a method for usage protection of distributed data, classified in class 705, subclass 51.
 - III. Claims 30-36, drawn to be apparatus for displaying selectable iconic array, classified in class 345, subclass 835.

3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:
Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I separate utility, such as ordering parts. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:
Inventions I and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be

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separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has a separate utility, such as ordering parts.

See MPEP § 806.05(d).

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention III has a separate utility, such as “displaying selectable iconic array”. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

5. Pursuant to telephonic conversation between applicant’s agent, Mr. James Hwa and Kyle Choi, Primary Examiner, group I was provisionally elected for prosecution with traverse.

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(I).

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Summary Of Instant Office Action

7. Applicant's arguments, filed March 19, 2002, concerning claims 1-17 and 28-36 rejections, Paper No. 19, Office Action, mailed December 06, 2001 have been considered, and the claims are prosecuted as below.

8. Claims 19 and 27 were canceled by the applicant vide amendments filed June 15, 2001, were left unentered, since the amendments were to be entered upon appeal. Applicant may cancel said claims again.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 11-17, 19, 21-25, 27 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cornett et al (US Patent 5,216,612).

Cornett et al disclose:

Claim 1. A parts ordering system [Abstract, lines 1-4, 8-9 and 16-17] having a first domain [Fig. 1 (3),], a second domain [Fig. 1 (5 with 7)] and a third domain [Fig. 1 (6 with 8)] connected in a tree structure, each domain being a unit of processing in a computer system

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corresponding to a working unit on a production line [Fig. 1 (2, 10)], wherein said second domain includes:

expansion means [Fig. 1 (5 with 7), described col. 9, lines 11-22, col. 12, line 48 through col. 14, line 12, col. 15, line 62 through col. 16, line 7], for expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order that has been received from the first domain [Figs. 3, 10A-10D (PF13-Explode Bill with No Images), col. 22, line 14 through col. 23, line 11]; and

communication means for communicating, to the third domain, corresponding to each component part expanded by said expansion means, the order for each component part expanded by said expansion means [Col. 1, lines 44-61 (specifically lines 47-51, 57-61), claim 1, line 30, col. 15, line 17 through col. 16, line 16 (specifically lines 19-20, 50-56, 60-61)].

Claim 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said first domain, second domain and third domain have means for issuing an order [Col. 15, lines 52-53], means for receiving an order [Col. 15, lines 19-20 read with col. 33, lines 28-30, 32-34], means for devising a machining plan based upon the order received [Figs. 8A-8D-Header], means for performing expansion, into each component part [Fig. 1 (5 with 7) and Figs. 10A-10D-PF13], in accordance with the machining plan, means for devising an ordering plan for a part that has been expanded into its component parts Fig. 7 (42), col. 18, lines 21-22 and col. 25, line 26], means for ordering a part expanded into individual parts units based upon the ordering plan [As

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above], means for reading data from a database in accordance with the order for the part [Fig. 7 (42)], and means for writing the read data to the database [Col. 21, line 39 recited with col. 25, line 26];

wherein a plurality of connections are made possible on a network in a tree structure [Col. 9, lines 61-62, col. 1, lines 50-51, 57-61, col. 9, lines 13-14. Reference's hierarchical structure would be used for claimed purpose [Fig. 1 (5 with 7)]].

Claim 4. The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for devising a machining plan has means for comparing a designated delivery date of a received order and planned production date retained in a database, and means for scheduling an expected production date based upon results of the comparison [Fig. 7 (42) and Fig. 6 (29, 37). It needs be mentioned that various means are included/had, such as comparing, into different other means, like in planing means].

Claim 5. The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for performing expansion into each component part includes:

means for performing expansion in units of individual parts for constructing a manufactured product based upon a received order [Figs, 10A-10D-PF13], and

means for calculating an amount of parts [Fig. 30 (262), col. 31, lines 24-25.

Reference's calculating means would be used for claimed purpose].

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Claim 6. The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for devising an ordering plan has means for comparing an amount of parts contained in inventory and an amount of parts required [As in applicant's claim 4 above], and means for calculating minimum units of an order [Fig. 30 (262), col. 31, lines 24-25. Reference's calculating means would be used for claimed purpose] based upon results of the comparison.

Claim 7. The system according to claim 1, wherein said first domain, which corresponds to an ordering starting point, has means for issuing an order in accordance with an order input [Fig. 1 (3), being a computer, 3 has to have the claimed feature], and said third domain, which corresponds to an ordering end point, has means for receiving an order in response to the issuance of the order [Fig. 1 (6, 8), being a computer, 6 has to have an order receiving means, such as monitor, memory etc.].

Claim 8. The system according to claim 1, wherein said first, second and third domains are connected in a tree structure, and an order for each component part processed by said first domain is communicated to the third domain without processing being duplicated by the expansion means of said second domain [Fig. 1 (3,5, 6). It needs be mentioned that user sends the order to 3 which would communicate/transmit it to 6 directly].

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Claim 9. A parts ordering system in which a domain on a first network, and a domain on a second network are connected via a public line, wherein the domain on said second network includes:

a) means for receiving an order from the domain on said first network [Col. 15, lines 19-20 read with col. 33, lines 28-30, 32-34];

b) means for devising a machining plan based upon the order [Figs. 8A-8D-Header, reference's planning function would be used for claimed limitation];

c) means for expanding, into each component part [Fig. 1 (5 with 7) and Figs. 10A-10D-PF13], a part corresponding to the order in accordance with the machining plan ;

d) means for devising an ordering plan for each expanded component part [Fig. 7 (42), col. 18, lines 21-22 and col. 25, line 26. Reference's planning function would be used for claimed limitation]; and

e) means for ordering in units of individual parts in accordance with the ordering plan [Col. 15, lines 52-53. Reference's planning function would be used for claimed limitation].

Claim 10. The system according to claim 9, wherein the domain on a third network connected to the domain on the second network via a LAN receives an order, which is issued by the domain on said first network, via a public line, the domain on said second network and said LAN [Fig. 1, col. 9, lines 61-64, col. 10, lines 8-10. Reference's connections between/among separate computers would be in LAN configuration using phone/public line].

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Claim 11. A parts ordering system having a database which stores an amount of specific parts contained in inventory [Fig. 1 (8 in 6), and subsystems 3, 5, 6 connected with each other [Col. 9, lines 61-64]], as well as a first domain, second domain and third domain connected in a tree structure, each domain is a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, wherein said second domain includes:

a) means for expanding [Figs. 2A, 2B described col 4, line 30-col 9, line 35], into each component part [See the discussion of applicant's claim 1a above], apart corresponding to an order received from the first domain;

b) communication means for communicating, to the third domain, orders in individual parts units expanded by said means for expanding [See the discussion of applicant's claim 1b above]; and

c) stopping means [Fig. 27 (224, 244), col. 29, lines 3-4, 21] for comparing the amount of specific parts contained in inventory stored in the database and a required amount of specific parts obtained by expansion performed by said means for expanding [Col. 13, lines 30-34, Fig. 6 (29, 37), col. 16, line 65. Reference's comparing function would be used for claimed purpose], and stopping the communication of an order to the third domain [Above cited suspending/stopping function would be used to stop/suspend subsystem 6 in Fig. 1 for claimed limitation] in a case where the amount of specific parts contained in inventory is greater, by a prescribed amount, than the required amount of specific parts [Col. 30, lines 7-8].

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Claim 12. A parts ordering system in which a first domain is internally provided with a database in which an amount of specific parts contained in inventory has been stored [Fig. (3) with subsystem 5 including 7)], wherein said first domain includes:

means for expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order received from the second domain [See discussion of applicant's claim 11a above with subsystem 6 as first domain and subsystem 5 as second domain];

communication means for communicating, to the third domain, orders in individual parts units expanded by said means for expanding [See discussion of applicant's claim 11b above];

stopping means for comparing the amount of specific parts contained in inventory stored in the database within the first domain and a required amount of specific parts obtained by expansion performed by said means for expanding, and stopping the communication of an order to the third domain in a case where the amount of specific parts contained in inventory is greater, by a prescribed amount, than the required amount of specific parts [See discussion of applicant's claim 11c above]; and

wherein each domain is a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line [Fig. 1 (2 having 3, 5, 6), col. 9, lines 56-61].

Claim 13. A parts ordering system having a first domain [Fig. 1 (3) and a second domain [Fig. 1 (5)] connected in a tree structure, each domain is a unit of processing in a

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computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, wherein said second domain includes:

means for expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding to the order received from the first domain [See discussion of claim 12a above]; and

first control means which controls reference permission for referring from an operating terminal connected to said second domain [Fig. 1 (2) connected to subsystems 3, 5 and 6, col. 8, lines 52-60],, to status of order receiving/issuance in individual parts units expanded by said means for expanding [Fig. 1 (5) viewed with Figs. 10A-10D (PF13)].

Claim 14. The system according to claim 13, wherein said first control means permits reference to order data, machining plan data and sub-part inventory data of said first domain and limits reference to data required by said second domain [Fig. 1 (2) having subsystems 3, 5, 6, 11, 113 wherein 3 refers to 6, 11 and 13 for claimed limitations].

Claim 15. The system according to claim 14, wherein said first control means gives reference permission based upon a, combination of a domain number and password [Using System 1 having controller 2, and parts manual file 6: col. 15, line 61-62. It needs be mentioned that reference's complex number referring function would be used for claimed purpose. For additional confidentially's sake use of password would be implemented, the use of which notoriously practiced].

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Claim 16. A parts ordering system having a first domain and a second domain connected in a tree structure, each domain is a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, wherein said second domain includes:

means for expanding, into component parts, a part corresponding to an order that has been received from the first domain [See the discussion of applicant's claim 13a above];

first control means which controls permission to refer to an order for a component part expanded by said means for expanding, reference being made from an operating terminal connected to the second domain [See the discussion of applicant's claim 13b above], and

second control means for controlling permission to refer to ordering information, within the first domain, related to an order issued to the second domain [Fig. 1 (11 having 12, 13 which cooperate with 4 and 3, 3 and 4 cooperating 7 in 5 and 8 in 6 [Col. 8, lines 62-64, col. 9, lines 23-24, 29-31, 36-41].

Claim 17. The system according to claim 16, wherein the system is constituted by a single domain having order issuing means, order receiving means, machining planning means, constructional expansion means, ordering planning means and ordering means, an interface for making possible interconnection of domains in a tree structure, and input means, inputting, to a database, information relating to a part delivered in accordance with the order [Fig. 1 (1), col. 8, lines 3-11, 30-37, 52-61 and discussion about various claimed limitations here in applicant's claims above].

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Claims 19 and 27. Wherein said storage device is a database [Col. 25, line 26].

Following claim being a method claim of applicant's claim 1 above, same rationale applies to its rejection.

Claim 21. A parts ordering method whereby a first domain, a second domain connected in a tree structure, each domain being a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, deliver and receive orders, comprising:

an expanding step at which the second domain expands, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order that has been received from the first domain ; and

a communication step at which the second domain communicates, to the third domain, an order for each component part expanded at the expanding step.

Following claim being a method claim of applicant's system claim 11, same rationale applies to its rejection.

Claim 22. A parts ordering method whereby a first domain, a second domain and a third domain connected in a tree structure deliver and receive orders via a database which stores an amount of specific parts contained in inventory, each domain is a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, comprising:

an expanding step at which the second domain, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order received from the first domain;

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a communication step at which the second domain communicates, to the third domain, orders in individual parts units expanded at the expanding step; and

a stopping step at which the second domain compares the amount of specific parts contained in inventory stored in the database and a required amount of specific parts obtained by expansion performed at the expanding step, and stops the communication of an order to the third domain in a case where the amount of specific parts contained in inventory is greater, by a prescribed amount, than the required amount of specific parts.

Undernoted claim being the method claim of the system claim 12, same rationale of rejection is applied.

Claim 23. A parts ordering method whereby a first domain, which is internally provided with a database in which an amount of specific parts contained in inventory has been stored, accepts an order from a second domain and communicates the order to a third domain, each domain being a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, the method comprising:

an expanding step at which the first domain performs expansion, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order received from the second domain;

a communication step at which the first domain communicates, to the third domain, orders in individual parts units expanded at the expanding step; and

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a stopping step at which the first domain compares the amount of specific parts contained in inventory stored in the database within the first domain and a required number of specific parts obtained by expansion performed at the expanding step, and stops the communication of an order to the third domain in a case where the amount of specific parts contained in inventory is greater, by a prescribed amount, than the required amount of specific parts.

Claim 24. A parts management system having a database which stores an amount of specific parts contained in inventory [Fig. 1 (5 in 1). Subsystem 5 of system 1 functions as parts management system, col. 12, lines 48-49], as well as a first domain, a second domain and a third domain connected in a tree structure, each domain is a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, wherein said second domain includes:

means for expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding to an order received from the first domain [See the discussion of applicant's claim 1a above]; and

communication means for communicating, to the third domain, orders in individual parts units expanded by said means for expanding [See the discussion of applicant's claim 1b above];

said second domain having input means for inputting [Read in light of col. 9, lines 61-64 and col. 10, lines 8-9, subsystem 5 in Fig. 1 would inherently have an input means, such as keyboard, mouse etc.], to the database [Fig. 1 (7), col. 12, lines 57-63 and col. 25, line 26], information relating to a part delivered in accordance with an order.

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Claim 25. The system according to claim 24, wherein the system is constituted by a single domain having order issuing means [Col. 15, lines 19-20], order receiving means, machining planning means [Col. 15, lines 19-20 read with col. 33, lines 28-30, 323-34], constructional expansion means [Fig. 1 (11) and 15A-15N], ordering planning means [Fig. 1 (13), Figs. 8A-8D, headings] and ordering means [as above], an interface for making possible interconnection of domains in a tree structure [Col. 9, lines 61-64], and input means inputting, to a database, information relating to a part delivered in accordance with the order [Col. 15, lines 19-20 and col. 33, lines 28-30, 32-34].

Claim 29. A computer readable recording medium [Col. 25, line 26. Reference's database would have storage medium which would encompass HD, CD, Diskette etc. } on which has been recorded a program by which the following means are implemented by a computer:

means for issuing an order [Col. 15, lines 52-53];

means for receiving an order [Col. 15, lines 19-20 read with col. 33, lines 28-30, 32-34];

means for devising a machining plan based upon the order received [Figs. 8A-8D-

Header. Reference's planning function would be used for claimed limitation];

means for expanding [Fig. 1 (5 with 7) and Figs. 10A-10D-PF13], into each component part, in accordance with the machining plan [Reference's expanding function would be used for claimed limitation];

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means for devising an ordering plan for a part that has been expanded into each component parts [Figs. 8A-8D-Header. Referenc's planning function would be used for claimed limitation];

means for ordering a part expanded into each component part corresponding to the ordering plan [Col. 15, lines 52-53. Referenc's ordering function would be used for claimed limitation];

means for reading data from a database in accordance with the order for the part [Fig. 7 (42)]; and

means for writing the read data to the database [Col. 21, line 39 recited with col. 25, line 26].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cornett et al (US Patent 5,216,612) in view of Wagner (US Patent 4,980,826).

In the following claim Cornett et al show:

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Claim 3. The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for receiving an order has means for making a comparison with data, which has been retained in a database [Col. 13, lines 30-34 (specifically lines 31, 33), Fig. 6 (29, 37), col. 16, line 65], yet Cornett et al fail to teach the feature below:

However, Wagner teaches the same:

to determine whether an order is a new order, a modified order or retransmission of the same order [Col. 14, lines 15-17].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art at the time of applicant's invention to incorporate Wagner's feature in Cornett et al's invention, because it would facilitate to advantageously use/employ the prevalent procedure/function/technique.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments filed March 19, 2002 have been fully considered, and are moot in view of new grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

A) Huang et al., US Patent 6,151,582. Decision Support System For The Management Of An Agile Supply Chain.

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B) Matsuzaki et al., US Patent 5,357,439. Custom-Made Manufacturing System And Custom-Made Manufacturing Method.

C) Sellers et al., US Patent 5,311,438. Integrated Manufacturing System.


D) Kobayashi et al., US Patent 5,231,585. Computer-Integrated Manufacturing System And Method.

E) Lee et al., US Patent 5,089,970. Integrated Manufacturing System.


15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Irshadullah whose telephone number is (703) 308-6683. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz, can be reached on (703) 305-9643. The fax number for the organization is (703)746-7239 and for after Final (703)-746-7238.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-3900.


M. Irshadullah

June 06, 2002


KYLE J. CHOI
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art Unit 3623